RAJYA SABHA

Monday, the 7th December, 1987/16 Agrahayana, 1909 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock. **Mr. Chairman** in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Manuguru Super Thermal Power Project (A.P.)

*421. SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Thermal Power Corporation has submitted any project synopsis for trying up necessary linkages and feasibility report in respect of the proposed Manuguru Super Thermal Project in Andhra Pradesh which is expected to yield benefits in the Eighth Plan period; and if not, whether the same is under preparation; and

(b) what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POWER IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI): (a) and (b) The National Thermal Power Corporation have submitted a project synopsis for a Super Thermal Power Project of 1000 MW (2x500 MW) capacity, at Manuguru in Andhra Pradesh for the purpose of planning of linkages. The Corporation are currently in the process of preparing a feasibility report in respect of the proposed project.

SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY: Mr Chairman, Sir, this Manuguru project is a very important one. In fact, this issue was taken up this House on several occasions. The State Government has also written several times to the Central Government in regard to this project, stressing the need for its early clearance. Because of the importance of this project, it is very necessary that this should be cleared early. As a matter of fact, the Southern Region is likely to face a power deficit in the next three-four months. I request the hon. Ministers of Power and Finance to see that this important project is cleared soon. The feasibility report has already been submitted by the State Government and I do not know why the Centre is taking so much time to clear this project. The hon. Minister of Energy is sitting here. He is very much interested that the whole country should develop and he is keen in seeing that the power shortage in the country is met. Therefore, I would like to know what steps have been taken by the Central Government and how much more time they will take to clear this project

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, with your permission, I would like to reply to the question of the hon. Member. Yes. According to the Andhra Pradesh Government, this is an important project But this has not been included by the Planning Commission in the Eighth Plan. We do realise that Andhra Pradesh, which was surplus in power, which had a satisfactory position so far as power was concerned till this year, is facing a great shortage due to the drought conditions. There is also likely to be a severe shortage in the Southern Region. In this connection, last week, we had a meeting of all the Power Ministers of the Southern Region and we shared this concern with them. The feasibility report is not yet with us. The required coal linkage is also not there Since this project has not been cleared by the Planning Commission, funds are not tied up. Therefore, it has not been identified and priority has not been given to it.

SHRI B SATYANARAYAN REDDY: Sir, the Department of Power of the State Government in their letter dated 2.7 87 have informed the National Thermal Power Corporation that they have prepared and submit-

ted a project synopsis for trying necessary linkage. Further action thereon has also been initiated and the feasibility report in respect of the proposed project which is expected to yield benefits in the 8th Plan period is also under preparations. In view of the importance of this project, we request the Government to take early decision about this power project.

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI: We can assure the hon. Member that whatever early steps can be initiated, we shall certainly try to take because there is likely to be a shortage of power in the southern states. But so far as this particular project is concerned, it will first have to be found out whether we can develop the coal-mine with which it can ultimately be started. Finance constraint is also there.

Since the feasibility report has not yet to come to us and it is under preparation, as soon as it comes we will look into that. So, I have explained the position as it transpires today.

PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, there has been a statement that the Government is viewing the power position with all the seriousness. If that is so, I would like to know, what has been done by the Ministry of Energy in conjunction with the Coal Department to find out the linkage of this particular project with the coal output there?

Secondly, if we have to talk in terms of the paucity of funds, we will never be able to make a beginning. I would like to ask, how much have they been able to impress upon the need of a project of this nature, especially when coal is available in the nearby places, to get this project included, so that not only the power position could be improved in south but there could be linkage with other grids also? Thus there could be improvement in the power position in the country.

SHRI VASANT SATHE: Sir, we are aware that progressively, up till now, Andhra enjoyed position of being surplus in power, it was even giving power to other States. Unfortunately due to very bad rains and the hydel reservoir going down this year Andhra is in difficulty. We are hopeful that due to better rains the situation would improve and Andhra will again get back its glory of being a surplus power State. But we have to look in the long term. We feel that in the long term there will be necessity of additional power resources. Srisailam as a hydel power station has been conceived. Manuguru and Vijaywada Extension thermal power station are also being conceived. Earlier Manuguru was thought of as a State project 2 x 210 MW. Later on the State itself said that they did not have the funds even for this. They asked the Centre to take it up as a Central super thermal power station. We decided to do that. We prepared a feasibility report, but again there is resource constraint. Even in the Seventh Five Year Plan it could not be included by the Planning Commision. In fact, simultaneous measures were taken for coal and I may inform the House, through you, Sir, that we have made a budgetary provision for open cast mining which will be completed by 1989-90 and the capacity is 2.75 million tonnes. In 1987-88 it will give us 197 million tonnes and we will be able to meet the coal requirements of Manuguru project provided again the point comes in of finding the resources. If we cannot find the resources either from the State or the Centre, we can think of bilateral or multilateral or outside funding. That also we are willing to explore.

SHRI DHARAM CHANDER PRASHANT: I would like to ask the hon. Minister what the number of thermal power stations in the country is. Is there any proposal to instal any thermal power station during 1988-89.

SHRI VASANT SATHE: Where?

SHRI DHARAM CHANDER PRASHANT: In the country during 1988-89.

SHRI VASANT SATHE: In the country? Yes, there are quite a few stations.

DR. G. VIJAYA MOHAN REDDY: Manguru has got some of the best coal mines and specially coal is available at the surface itself. As the hon. Minister has pointed out, open cast mines can come up very easily and very well. This will be the cheapest supply of the coal in the country. Under the circumstances, keeping in view that electricity has to be organised as a grid, why should not priority be given and the work undertaken immediately?

SHRI VASANT SATHE: Sir, this is a suggestion. We will consider this suggestion also.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 422.

Availability of Cooking Gas Facility at Block Centres in States

*422. SHRI LAL K. ADVANI:†
SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to answer to the Starred Question 33 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 9th November, 1987 and state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration for making available cooking gas at block centres in various States especially in the tribal and hilly areas; if so, what are the out-lines thereof; and if not, what are the reasons therefor;

(b) the State-wise number of such block centres where this facility is already available; and

(c) the State-wise targets fixed for the current year and the next year in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) While there is no proposal to make the LPG facility available at Block Headquarters as such including such centres in the tribal and hilly areas, LPG marketing is being extended by the Oil industry in a phased manner to locations with a population of around 20,000 and above and offering sufficient potential for economically viable distributorships;

(b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha;

(c) Does not arise in view of part (a) above.

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, before I put my question I would like to point out to you that while Government has always the right in certain cases to say that the information is being collected and it will be laid on the Table of the House as soon as possible, in this particular case, the information that is being sought is such that it should be readily available with the Ministry here; it is not a State subject.

Even in the first part of the question, the reply given is: "LPG marketing is being extended by the oil industry in a phased manner to locations with a population of around 20,000 and above". Such phased planning of the whole programme would necessarily entail that they must be knowing the State-wise targets fixed in the current year and the next year in this regard. So I fail to understand how in a matter of this kind it can be said that the information is to be collected, it should all be available here. Sir, this is a way only of evading the question. In a question of this kind I expected the Minister to give us the basic facts about the number of places because there is not a large number of places where LPG facilities are available It is very limited; it should be much more than it is. Nevertheless, having pointed this out, I would

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Lal K. Advani.